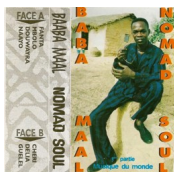


Baaba Maal - Nomad Soul (1998)

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1. *Fanta* 2. *Mbolo* 3. *Douwayra* [play](#) 4. *Nayo* 5. *Cherie* [play](#) 6. *Delia* 7. *Guelel* 8. *Yanna*

Personnel:

Baaba Maal (vocals, guitar); Assane N'Doye Cisse (guitar, sabar); Barry Reynolds (guitar); Kauwding Cissokho (kora); Tania Lo (saxophone, background vocals); Baayo Ndiaye (soprano & tenor saxophones); Jon Hassell (trumpet); Hilaire Chaby Harry (keyboards); Elhadji Niang (bass); Alioune Diouf (drums); Bakhane Seck (percussion, djembe); Ndongo Mbaye, Mabaye Diagne (percussion, sabar); Thio Mbaye (djembe); Massamba Diop, Badara Seck, Luis Jardim, Groko, Barou Sal (percussion); Paul "Groucho" Smykle (programming); Mansour Seck, Screaming Orphans (background vocals).

On *Nomad Soul* Baaba Maal has stayed true to his Fulani herdsman roots, singing as he travels and working with the best of those he meets along the way. On his seventh U.S. release, you will find collaborations with ambient pioneers Brian Eno and Jon Hassell, Celtic influences with Irish singers "The Screaming Orphans," and a duet with reggae star Luciano. Afro Celt Sound System mainstay Simon Emmerson produces, as do Groucho Smykle, Ron Aslan, and Mykael Riley. This CD is a successful blend of diverse musical influences united by the solid Senegalese sound of Baaba Maal. Maal and his band Daande Lenol are known for extraordinary live performances full of passionate playing and gravity-defying dancing but Maal also makes carefully refined studio recordings using top producers. The result is a polished album that does not lose Maal's vibrancy. ---Jeff Grubb, Editorial Reviews

Like his fellow Senegalese countryman Youssou N'Dour, Baaba Maal has become one of the most important African musicians in the world today. I have been a Baaba Maal fan for a long time now, and have followed his career over the years. The first album I bought was "Baayo",

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which was released in 1991. Then came "Firin' In Fouta" in 1994. "Nomad Soul" was first released in 1997. His long time companion, Mansour Seck, who has launched his own solo career in the last few years, seems less prominent on this CD.

Over the years Baaba Maal's music has become progressively more "mainstream", no doubt opening more markets to his music. "Nomad Soul" is no exception, though the traditional sound is still strongly evident in tracks such as Mbolo, Cherie. Other songs, like Souka Nayo and Fanta have a much stronger pop influence, while tracks like Guelel and Yiriyaro have that strong traditional and dance blend which has become characteristic of Baaba Maal's music. The last track, Lam Lam, which is a religious song about what the future might hold, is my favourite on this album. It's interesting combination of sounds along with its devotional melody/voice line does it for me.

In a way I prefer Baaba Maal's older recordings. Don't get me wrong. I am not a purist when it comes to "ethnic" music. If music stays closed to outside influences, it may end up in a museum, after all. Music is there to be listened to. But "Baayo" is still my personal favourite Baaba Maal CD. I especially like the track Diahowo in which the tension is built up to a climatic and finally inspirational release. "Firin' In Fouta" was more dancy, and features a few tracks through which it is impossible to sit still. --- Christo "montxsuz" (Vancouver, Canada), amazon.com

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